

**CLAIMS**

1. A license information management apparatus which manages license information indicating a range in which digital content can be used, said apparatus comprising:

5 a data management unit operable to manage license information while ensuring security of the license information; and a storage unit operable to hold the license information whose security is ensured,

wherein said data management unit includes:

10 a secret key holding subunit operable to hold a secret key; and

a reproduction condition management subunit operable to encrypt the license information with the secret key, and to transfer the encrypted license information to said storage unit.

15 2. The license information management apparatus according to Claim 1,

wherein said reproduction condition management subunit further includes:

20 a reading subunit operable to read out the encrypted license information and the secret key respectively from said storage unit and said secret key holding unit;

a decryption subunit operable to decrypt the read license information;

25 an information update subunit operable to update the decrypted license information in accordance with a use of digital content; and

30 an overwriting subunit operable to encrypt the updated license information with the secret key and overwrite in said storage unit.

3. The license information management apparatus according

to Claim 2,

wherein said storage unit further includes

a signature data storage subunit operable to hold data indicating a digital signature applied to a correspondence table  
5 indicating a correspondence between identification information which can identify the license information and information indicating an update history of the license information,

said data management unit further includes

a correspondence table storage subunit operable to hold the  
10 correspondence table, and

said reproduction condition management subunit is further operable to verify validity of the license information based on the data to which a digital signature is applied stored in said signature data storage unit and the correspondence table stored in said  
15 correspondence table storage unit.

4. The license information management apparatus according to Claim 3,

wherein the information indicating the update history  
20 indicates a number of updates or a random number,

said information update subunit is further operable to update the information indicating the number of updates or the random number when updating the license information, and

said overwriting subunit is further operable to overwrite the  
25 correspondence table concerning the information indicating the updated number of updates or the random number in said storage unit.

5. The license information management apparatus according  
30 to Claim 4,

wherein the digital content is encrypted, and  
the license information includes:

reproduction condition information defining a condition indicating a range in which the digital content can be used; and a content key for decrypting the digital content.

5 6. The license information management apparatus according to Claim 5,

wherein said data management unit includes

an information judgement subunit operable to judge whether the license information is new or not, and

10 said reproduction condition management subunit is operable to perform the encryption and the transfer of the license information which is judged as new.

7. The license information management apparatus according to Claim 5,

wherein said data management unit is made up of an integrated circuit card, and

said storage unit is made up of a flash memory.

20 8. A license information management method for managing license information indicating a range in which digital content can be used, the method comprising

managing license information while ensuring security of the license information,

25 wherein said managing includes

encrypting the license information with a secret key stored in a secret key holding unit, and transferring the encrypted license information to a storage unit operable to hold the license information whose security is ensured.

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9. The license information management method according to Claim 8,

wherein said encrypting and transferring further includes:  
reading the encrypted license information and the secret key respectively from the storage unit and the secret key holding unit;

5        decrypting the read license information;  
          updating the decrypted license information in accordance with a use of digital content; and  
          encrypting the updated license information with the secret key and overwriting in the storage unit.

10      10. The license information management method according to Claim 9,

          wherein the storage unit further includes  
          a signature data storage subunit operable to hold data  
15 indicating a digital signature applied to a correspondence table  
indicating a correspondence between identification information which can identify the license information and information indicating an update history of the license information, and  
          further in said encrypting and transferring,  
          validity of the license information is verified based on data  
20 to which a digital signature is applied stored in the signature data storage unit and the correspondence table.

25      11. A computer executable program used for a license information management apparatus which manages license information indicating a range in which digital content can be used, the program comprising:

          managing license information while ensuring security of the license information;  
30      said managing includes  
          encrypting the license information with a secret key stored in a secret key holding unit and transferring the encrypted license

information to a storage unit operable to hold license information whose security is ensured.

12. The program according to Claim 11,

5 wherein said encrypting and transferring includes:

reading the encrypted license information and the secret key respectively from the storage unit and the secret key holding unit;

decrypting the read license information;

10 updating the decrypted license information in accordance with a use of digital content; and

encrypting the updated license information with the secret key and overwrite in the storage unit.

15 13. The program according to Claim 12,

wherein the storage unit includes

a signature data storage subunit operable to hold data indicating a digital signature applied to a correspondence table indicating a correspondence between identification information which can identify the license information and information indicating an update history of the license information, and

20 further in said encrypting and transferring,

validity of the license information is verified based on data to which a digital signature is applied stored in the signature data 25 storage unit and the correspondence table.